

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

The Amendment is filed in response to the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment dated February 16, 2005. In the present amendment, Claim 24 is properly identified as "Previously Presented" instead of "Currently Amended", as indicated in the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendment is compliant, and respectfully request entry thereof.

Claims 11, 12, 14-16, and 18-24 are pending in the application. Claims 11, 12, 15, 18, 19 and 21-24 are amended; and Claims 13, 17 and 25-30 are canceled by the present amendment. Support for the amended claims can be found in the original specification, claims and drawings.<sup>1</sup> No new matter is presented.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claim 27 was objected to because of an informality; Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement; Claims 11-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as incomplete for omitting essential steps; and Claims 11-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In response to the objection to Claim 27 and the rejection of Claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, these claims are canceled. Therefore, the objection and rejections set forth thereto are rendered moot.

Claims 11-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as incomplete for omitting essential steps.

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., specification, Figs. 2-3.

Regarding Claims 11, 15 and 21, these claims were rejected for omitting a description of a cooperative interrelationship between the “decoding units”, recited in these claims. In response Claims 11, 15 and 21 are amended to recite “wherein the first decoding unit and second decoding unit are arranged according to a parallel or serial scheme”, as depicted, for example, in Figs. 2-3. Further, Claims 11-13, 15, 18 and 21-22 were rejected for not describing the relationship between “a respective decoding unit”, “decoding units”, “a first decoding unit”, etc. In response, Claims 11-13, 15, 18 and 21-22 are amended to clearly describe the relationship between the “first decoder”, “second decoder” and a “plurality of decoders”, as recited in Claims 11-13, 15, 18 and 21-22.

Claims 11-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

Specifically, the Official Action rejects Claim 1, stating that the relationship between “the number of normalization units” and the various alternative recitations thereof renders the claim indefinite. In response, Claim 11 is amended to recite “at least a first normalization unit”, associated with a single decoder.

Claim 12 was rejected because the feature “the normalization unit of a preceding decoding unit of the subset”, fails to have antecedent basis. In response, Claim 12 is amended to recite “at least a first normalization unit located at an output side of the first decoding unit”. Claim 12 was also rejected for reciting the term “subset”, which was cited in the outstanding Official Action as failing to have antecedent basis. As noted above, the term “subset” is removed from dependent Claim 12.

Claims 15 and 18 were rejected because the phrase “the data” was cited as failing to have antecedent basis. In response, these claims are amended to simply recite “data”, which is introduced for the first time in these claims.

Regarding Claim 19, the phrase “the normalization factor or factors” was cited in this claim as failing to have proper antecedent basis. In response, this claim is amended to recite “the respective normalization factor”, to rely on the recitation of this feature in Claim 15 for antecedent basis. The outstanding Official Action also asserted that the term “the basis of means of variance...” lacked antecedent basis. In response, Claim 19 is amended to recite “a basis of means of variance...” as this feature is introduced for the first time.

Claim 21 was rejected because the term “the decoding unit”, was cited as failing to have proper antecedent basis. In response, Claim 21 is amended to correct this language, and now recites “the first decoding unit” to be consistent with the amendments noted above.

Claim 22 was also rejected for failing to have antecedent basis for the phrases “the normalization unit” and “the subset”. In response, the term “the subset” is removed from the claim and the claim is further amended to recite “the at least one of said plurality of normalization units” to rely on this feature as it is recited in amended independent Claim 21.

Further, support for the structural relationship between the plurality of decoders and the decoders and the normalization unit is clearly depicted in Figs. 2 and 3, for example, and in the corresponding portion of the specification.

Accordingly Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claims 11, 12, 15, 18, 19 and 21-24 recite the essential relationships (either structural or functional) between the claimed features. Further, these claims are amended to address the features cited in the outstanding Official Action as rendering the claims indefinite. Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are definite and clearly recite the subject matter Applicants regard as the invention.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 11, 12, 14-16, and 18-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 11, 12, 14-16, and 18-24 is definite and patentably distinguishing over the cited references. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of the application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



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Bradley D. Lytle  
Attorney of Record  
Registration No. 40,073  
Andrew T. Harry  
Registration No. 56,959

Customer Number  
**22850**

Tel: (703) 413-3000  
Fax: (703) 413 -2220  
(OSMMN 06/04)

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